



Victorian Association for  
the Teaching of English

**VATE Publications**

**2011**

**ENGLISH**

**Written examination sample paper**

The scenario in Section C has been prepared for the sole purpose of providing sample material for the VCE English Examination. Names of individuals and the characters are fictional, with no comparison with, or comment on, any living individual intended. The views expressed in the scenario are not necessarily those of the writer or publisher.

**Total writing time: 3 hours**

**TASK BOOK**

<i>Section</i>	<i>Number of questions</i>	<i>Number of questions to be answered</i>	<i>Marks</i>
A – Text response (Reading and responding)	20	1	20
B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)	4	1	20
C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)	1	1	20
			Total 60

**Materials**

Task book of 12 pages, including **Examination assessment criteria** on page 12.

You may use an English and/or bilingual printed dictionary.

**Instructions**

You must complete all **three sections** of the examination.

All answers must be written in English.

You must **not** write on two film texts in the examination.

**Section A – Text response (Reading and responding)** – Write the name of your selected text at the top of your answer page.

**Section B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)** – Write your **Context** and the name of your selected text at the top of your answer page.

**Section C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)**

**Disclaimer:** Exam instructions and the examination assessment criteria are taken from the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2010 English Exam. The VCAA does not endorse the content of this exam.

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**SECTION A – Text response (Reading and responding)****Instructions for Section A**

Section A requires students to complete **one analytical/expository** piece of writing in response to **one** topic (either **i.** or **ii.**) on **one** selected text.

Indicate at the top of your answer page whether you are answering **i.** or **ii.**

In your response you must develop a sustained discussion of **one** selected text from the Text list below.

Your response must be supported by close reference to and analysis of the selected text.

For collections of poetry or short stories, you may choose to write on several poems or short stories, or on one or two in very close detail, depending on what you think is appropriate.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 12 of this book.

Section A is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

If you write on a film text in Section A, you must **not** write on a film text in Section B.

**Text list**

- |                                                    |                            |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. <i>A Christmas Carol</i>                        | Charles Dickens            |
| 2. <i>A Farewell to Arms</i>                       | Ernest Hemingway           |
| 3. <i>A Human Pattern: Selected Poems</i>          | Judith Wright              |
| 4. <i>Bypass: the story of a road</i>              | Michael McGirr             |
| 5. <i>Cosi</i>                                     | Louis Nowra                |
| 6. <i>Dear America – Letters Home from Vietnam</i> | Edited by: Bernard Edelman |
| 7. <i>Dreams from My Father</i>                    | Barack Obama               |
| 8. <i>Great Short Works</i>                        | Edgar Allan Poe            |
| 9. <i>Interpreter of Maladies</i>                  | Jhumpa Lahiri              |
| 10. <i>Life of Pi</i>                              | Yann Martel                |
| 11. <i>Maestro</i>                                 | Peter Goldsworthy          |
| 12. <i>On the Waterfront</i>                       | Director: Elia Kazan       |
| 13. <i>Ransom</i>                                  | David Malouf               |
| 14. <i>Richard III</i>                             | William Shakespeare        |
| 15. <i>Selected Poems</i>                          | Kenneth Slessor            |
| 16. <i>The Old Man Who Read Love Stories</i>       | Director: Rolf de Heer     |
| 17. <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i>            | Mohsin Hamid               |
| 18. <i>Things We Didn't See Coming</i>             | Steven Amsterdam           |
| 19. <i>Twelve Angry Men</i>                        | Reginald Rose              |
| 20. <i>Year of Wonders</i>                         | Geraldine Brooks           |

1. *A Christmas Carol*

i. 'Scrooge has to learn the truth about himself before he can understand life in general.'

Discuss.

**OR**

ii. 'The places Scrooge visits are just as important to his redemption as the people he observes.'

Do you agree?

2. *A Farewell to Arms*

i. "So now they got her in the end. You never got away with anything. Get away hell!"

'Hemingway's novel is obsessed with death.'

Do you agree?

**OR**

ii. "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, and sacrifice and the expression in vain."

How does Hemingway's novel condemn rather than glorify war?

3. *A Human Pattern: Selected Poems*

i. 'Much of Judith Wright's poetry focuses on the relationship Australians, indigenous and non-indigenous, have with the land.'

How is this true of the collection?

**OR**

ii. 'Judith Wright draws on both mystical and real life experiences in her poetry.'

Discuss.

4. *Bypass: the story of a road*

i. "...[T]he power of the person who gets to tell the story, the one whose words are left standing."

What gives power to McGirr's story?

**OR**

ii. What are the main lessons learned by McGirr on his journey?

5. *Cosi*

i. Why does the audience ultimately question who is normal and who is not?

**OR**

ii. "With someone like you I could be true and faithful."

Is this the view of most of the characters in *Cosi*?

6. ***Dear America – Letters Home from Vietnam***

i. ‘The cumulative effect of these letters is that we not only change our views of war but of what things we value most in life.’

To what extent do you agree?

**OR**

ii. ‘The raw material of the letters is shaped into a powerful book.’

Why is *Dear America* so powerful?

7. ***Dreams from My Father***

i. ‘Everyone is doomed to repeat the mistakes of their parents, even by accident.’

Discuss with reference to *Dreams from My Father*.

**OR**

ii. ‘Barack Obama is a minor character in his own memoir.’

Do you agree?

8. ***Great Short Works***

i. ‘Poe constructs a perverse world in his stories. There is little evidence of normality.’

Is this how you view the collection?

**OR**

ii. ‘The reader knows something is going to happen, but is unaware of exactly what this something might be.’

How does Poe create tension in his stories?

9. ***Interpreter of Maladies***

i. How does Jhumpa Lahiri’s anthology explore what it is to feel alienated?

**OR**

ii. “Whenever he is discouraged, I tell him that if I can survive on three continents, then there is no obstacle he cannot conquer.”

‘Ultimately, Lahiri’s short stories are uplifting.’

Do you agree?

10. ***Life of Pi***

i. Pi condemns “those who lack artistry and imagination, the inability to commit to a story”.

How important is story-telling in the novel?

**OR**

ii. “Life on a lifeboat isn’t much of a life. It is like an end game in chess, a game with few pieces...”

How does Pi win the game of survival?

11. *Maestro*

i. “Better a small hurt now than a wasted life.”

How true is this for the characters in *Maestro*?

**OR**

ii. ‘Since events are only seen and judged by Paul, the reader should challenge them.’

Do you agree?

12. *On the Waterfront*

i. ‘Johnny Friendly is a stereotypical villain. Despite this, in some ways, he deserves the viewer’s sympathy.’

To what extent do you agree with this view?

**OR**

ii. ‘Kazan’s film offers viewers a close insight into the struggles of working class 1950s America.’

How does he achieve this?

13. *Ransom*

i. ‘To forgive those who have wronged one, one must first be at peace with oneself.’

To what extent does *Ransom* show this to be true?

**OR**

ii. What gives *Ransom* its emotional impact?

14. *Richard III*

i. “... [S]ince I cannot prove a lover ... I am determined to prove a villain...”

What motivates Richard to commit such evil acts in the play?

**OR**

ii. ‘*Richard III* shows that everyone is the architect of their own fate.’

Do you agree?

15. *Selected Poems*

i. How do Slessor’s poems reveal much about life in Australia?

**OR**

ii. ‘History plays a vital role in Slessor’s poetry.’

Discuss.

**16. *The Old Man Who Read Love Stories***

i. 'The darkness and brutality in *The Old Man Who Read Love Stories* makes it difficult to see it as a story about love.'

Do you agree?

**OR**

ii. 'If the harmony between man and nature is destroyed, all is threatened.'

How is this presented in the film?

**17. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist***

i. 'Mohsin Hamid actively involves the reader in his novel.'

How does he do this?

**OR**

ii. 'The novel shows us that the way in which people view the world is shaped by their cultural heritage.'

To what extent is this true?

**18. *Things We Didn't See Coming***

i. 'Amsterdam makes us aware of how much we depend on others for our well-being.'

To what extent do you agree?

**OR**

ii. How does the text show that we can never be completely prepared for the future?

**19. *Twelve Angry Men***

i. How does *Twelve Angry Men* show that prejudice can obscure the truth?

**OR**

ii. 'The defendant in *Twelve Angry Men* is the dominant character in the play even though he plays no active part.'

Do you agree?

**20. *Year of Wonders***

i. "I used to love this season..."

How does Brooks use the landscape and environment to explore the human experience?

**OR**

ii. "And so the rest of us set about learning to live in the wide green prison of our own election."

What do the characters learn about themselves and their relationships with others?

**END OF SECTION A**

**SECTION B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)****Instructions for Section B**

Section B requires students to complete an extended written response.

In your writing, you must draw on ideas suggested by **one** of the following **four** Contexts.

Your writing must draw directly from **at least one** selected text that you have studied for this Context and be based on the ideas in the prompt.

Your response may be an expository, persuasive or imaginative piece of writing.

If you write on a selected film text in Section A, you must **not** write on a selected film text in Section B.

Section B is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 12 of this book.

**Context 1 – The imaginative landscape**

1. *Island*.....Alistair MacLeod
2. *One Night the Moon*.....Director: Rachel Perkins
3. *The Poetry of Robert Frost*.....Robert Frost
4. *Tirra Lirra by the River*.....Jessica Anderson

**Prompt**

**‘We may think we alter the world around us, but in reality it is the landscape that shapes us.’**

**Task**

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘we may think we alter the world around us, but in reality it is the landscape that shapes us.’**

**OR**

**Context 2 – Whose reality?**

5. *A Streetcar Named Desire*.....Tennessee Williams
6. *Spies*.....Michael Frayn
7. *The Player*.....Director: Robert Altman
8. *The Shark Net*.....Robert Drewe

**Prompt**

**‘The way we perceive the world is shaped by internal rather than external factors.’**

**Task**

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘the way we perceive the world is shaped by internal rather than external factors.’**

OR

**Context 3 – Encountering conflict**

9. *Paradise Road*.....Director: Bruce Beresford  
 10. *The Crucible*.....Arthur Miller  
 11. *The Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif*.....Najaf Mazari and Robert Hillman  
 12. *The Secret River*.....Kate Grenville

**Prompt**

**‘The ways we attempt to resolve conflict define who we are.’**

**Task**

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘the ways we attempt to resolve conflict define who we are.’**

OR

**Context 4 – Exploring issues of identity and belonging**

13. *Growing up Asian in Australia*.....Alice Pung  
 14. *Sometimes Gladness*.....Bruce Dawe  
 15. *The Member of the Wedding*.....Carson McCullers  
 16. *Witness*.....Director: Peter Weir

**Prompt**

**‘To know who you are is to know where you belong.’**

**Task**

Complete an extended written response in expository, imaginative or persuasive style. Your writing must draw from **at least one** selected text for this Context and explore the idea that **‘to know who you are is to know where you belong.’**



**SECTION C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)****Instructions for Section C**

Section C requires students to analyse the ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view.

Section C is worth one-third of the total assessment for the examination.

Read the opinion piece *AllAbroad* and then complete the task below.

Write your analysis as a coherently structured piece of prose.

Your response will be assessed according to the criteria set out on page 12 of this book.

**TASK**

How is written and visual language used to attempt to persuade readers to share the point of view of the writer of the *AllAbroad* webpage?

**Background information**

A gap year is the term used to describe a year's break between completing Year 12 and starting university or a career. This webpage was posted on the website of *AllAbroad*, a company specialising in the provision of gap year programmes.



The ultimate gap year experience for young Australians

*"What an amazing experience — words can't describe what this year has done for my self-confidence. Who would have thought that straight out of school I'd be teaching a class of 45 children, navigating remote magical jungles, camping under the stars by the ocean and riding a tuk-tuk through the throbbing streets of Bangkok... and all in the first month! Guys — put all of those uni plans on hold and get out there. I promise it will be the smartest decision you ever make."*

**Hayley, AllAbroad gap year success story**



### **Congratulations, and welcome *Abroad!***

First of all, we would like to congratulate you — by visiting the AllAbroad website you have taken the first step towards achieving the dream of a lifetime. The gap year is one of the most exhilarating and edifying experiences a young adult can have. And with just a little forethought and planning, it can also be transformed into a powerful act of goodwill. Imagine: in a single overseas journey you could combine feats of wild adventure with invaluable and rewarding acts of charity. You could help others whilst also helping yourself to all the world has to offer. The opportunities are endless — so read on to find out just why so many young people just like yourself have already seized the opportunity offered by Australia's premier gap year provider, AllAbroad...

### **Expand your horizons — get that all important life experience**

No doubt you've heard older siblings or other young adults talk about the employment difficulties they face as an enthusiastic, but inexperienced, jobseeker. And in Australia's current economic climate — where economists warn we are in a technical recession and face a deepening of our current skills shortage — uncertain employees are sitting tight in their current positions rather than re-entering the market. As a consequence it is getting harder for school leavers to secure employment. Melbourne Institute employment specialist Mark Wooden told *The Age* newspaper in February of this year that "it is to be expected that employment of teenagers falls during recessions... Young people don't come with skills, they have to acquire them." In the same article it was reported that, "youth unemployment has risen from 15.8% to 16.5 % over the past year." ('Jobs growth strong but not for the young' — February 11, *The Age*)

This is where the gap year comes in: spend a year overseas getting the best work experience available, add the details to your CV upon your return, and... suddenly you're more employable. You've read Hayley's ringing endorsement above, now consider this: she is currently working part-time as an education assistant in Queensland whilst undertaking study to become a fully qualified teacher of secondary English and TESOL. When she finishes her course she is heading back overseas to help establish an English language school in the impoverished northeast Thai district of Tha Rae. After that? Well, the world's her oyster, really. All thanks to the gap year.

### Make new friends — real social networking

So, sure you could spend the whole of next year slaving away at a university course, straight after the stresses of VCE and all those previous years of preparation for the all-important ATAR, talking to your high school friends on Facebook about how little time you have to see each other thanks to all those critical readings you get lumped with at the start of each semester but always seem to feel too tired to read...

Or alternatively you could spend the year soaking up Vitamin D in the great outdoors, perhaps with some of those same friends and certainly with a whole host of new ones, connecting face-to-face and one-on-one with like-minded youths who share a passion for adventure and a desire to help others. That's real social networking. Nothing beats the thrill of meeting new people from exotic locations and learning first-hand the intricacies of their culture; and what better way to do this than with a gap year? You'll make friends and memories to last you a lifetime; and of course you'll need to visit those new-found friends every so often, so there's all the excuse you need to keep travelling the world in the years to come!

### Help others, feel good about yourself

Of course the best thing about the *AllAbroad* gap year is that it makes you feel good — good about the choice you've made, good about your contribution to the global community, good about yourself. We guarantee that after hearing your first heartfelt "thank you" — whether it's from a student mastering the English alphabet thanks to your tutelage, or an overwhelmed teacher who can now conduct lessons indoors because of the classroom you helped build, or a relieved farmer whose crops were planted on time because you and a dozen other volunteers got your hands dirty and helped him over the line — we know you'll feel 100% satisfied with the decision you made.

Think back to the beginning of this year, when so much of Australia was ravaged by natural disaster — floods, cyclones, fires — and so many Australians carried on despite the tragedy, buoyed by the incredible spirit of generosity exhibited by family, friends and strangers alike. Think about how proud you felt at that moment; now imagine feeling like that for a whole year, knowing you are helping others so much less fortunate than yourself to carry on in a similar fashion. Well, don't imagine — do it!



To find out more about the *AllAbroad* gap year, click on one of the links below. All you need to get started is 100 points of identification and a sense of adventure...

Sign up for the ultimate *AllAbroad* gap year experience [here](#)

Read our satisfied customer testimonies [here](#)

Explore our amazing array of packages [here](#)

Contact us for more information [here](#)

Image source: <http://www.projects-abroad.com.au/projects/care/sri-lanka/?content=care-centers/>

**END OF SECTION C**  
**TURN OVER**

### Examination assessment criteria

The examination will address all the criteria. All student responses will be assessed against each criterion. The extent to which the response is characterised by:

#### Section A – Text response (Reading and responding)

- detailed knowledge and understanding of the selected text, demonstrated appropriately in response to the topic
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective discussion in response to the task
- controlled use of expressive and effective language appropriate to the task

#### Section B – Writing in Context (Creating and presenting)

- understanding and effective exploration of the ideas, and/or arguments relevant to the prompt
- effective use of detail and ideas drawn from the selected text as appropriate to the task
- development in the writing of a coherent and effective structure in response to the task, showing an understanding of the relationship between purpose, form, language and audience
- controlled use of language appropriate to the purpose, form and audience

#### Section C – Analysis of language use (Using language to persuade)

- understanding of the ideas and points of view presented
- analysis of ways in which language and visual features are used to present a point of view and to persuade readers
- controlled and effective use of language appropriate to the task

### CONTRIBUTORS

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Co-ordinated by the Exam Working Party of VATE

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END OF TASK BOOK